

Assessment of Integrated Research on Disaster Risk

(AIRDR Working Group)

Introduction

The Assessment of Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (AIRDR) project, under the umbrella of the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) programme, is a three-year project designed to undertake the first systematic and critical global assessment of integrated research on disaster risk. This is in furtherance of Goal 1 (promote integrated research, advocacy and awareness-raising) in IRDR's **Strategic Plan (2013-2017)**, to which AIRDR's activities are aligned.

What is Integrated Research on Disaster Risk?

For the purposes of this assessment, integrated disaster research involves two or more researchers from diverse disciplines and specialties—including professional and practitioner expertise—active in the co-production of novel concepts, theories and methods that leads to new knowledge. It includes a community of researchers spanning traditional academic boundaries (natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, health, engineering, law, arts, education and business), methodological approaches (quantitative, qualitative, analytical, interpretive, expressive, and performance), and real-world experiences. Integrated research examines problem-focused, socially-driven research questions that cannot be adequately addressed by one or a small number of research disciplines, or without collaborative problem solving and real-world engagement of non-academics.

Many refer to this as trans-disciplinary research (Hadorn et al. 2008) or trans-disciplinary action research (Stokols 2006). Integrated research permits a more comprehensive understanding of the construction of a particular disaster situation, context, or problem and also provides policy-relevant information for social interventions designed to reduce risk. An integrated research approach requires diverse epistemologies, theories and methodologies, with no prior assumptions about the primacy of each in addressing the problem. The notion of integrated research defined here also entails the incorporation of different stakeholders in the co-production of knowledge, especially in the problem formulation and dissemination of research results. Where such participation is involved, we refer to this as “participatory processes of integrated research.”

Finally, our consideration of integrated research on disaster risk considers the ways and extent to which researchers from northern continents and backgrounds interact with those from southern

reaches, promoting richness and synergies in research concepts, methods, and design.

The Goals

The goals of AIRDR are:

1. To provide a baseline of the current state of the science in integrated research on disaster risk to measure the effectiveness of multiple programmes.
2. To identify and support a longer-term science agenda for the research community and funding entities.
3. To provide the scientific basis to support policy and practice.

The Approach

There are two primary elements in the approach:

1. Document and critically assess the existing published scientific literature on integrated disaster risk. Questions to be considered include:
 - a. How has integrated research been constituted and organised?
 - b. What kinds of research qualify as integrated research on disaster risk?
2. Identify the strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and opportunities for new knowledge and investments. Questions to be considered include:
 - a. What is known well within the research community in terms of capacity, technology, tools, methodologies, and translation of findings to actions?
 - b. What evidence is there to support such strength in understanding?
 - c. What is less well-known in the research?
 - d. Where do the shortcomings come from, e.g. perils studied, regional understanding, spatial or temporal coverage of topics?
 - e. Where are the gaps in our empirical understanding of disaster risk where strategic investments could be made?
 - f. How do we identify what is not now known through our research but needs to be known?
 - g. What new opportunities are available for learning from the co-production of knowledge to further enhance integrative research?
 - h. What barriers impede integrative research and how might these be overcome?

Expected Outcomes

The following are the expected outcomes of the AIRDR project:

1. An assessment of integrated research on disaster risk.
2. A guideline on assessing the effectiveness of integrated research on disaster risk, which includes consideration of the methodology, criteria, factors, and the process of conducting such an assessment.
3. Identification and development of a long-term scientific research as references for scientific input and investment in IRDR research.

Additional outcomes to be generated by AIRDR include:

1. An AIRDR forum with full engagement of the international scientific research community.
2. Integrated research on disaster risk stimulated at the national, regional and global levels.
3. Establishment of a baseline and potential outline for future science investments.
4. Engagement and education of a young generation of researchers and practitioners during the AIRDR development process.

For more information about AIRDR visit the IRDR's website, www.irdrinternational.org/, or contact the IRDR IPO via email at connect@irdrinternational.org.

Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR)
c/o RAD/CAS
Room B713, No 9 Dengzhuang South Road,
Haidian District, Beijing, China 100094
Tel: [+86 10 8217 8917](tel:+861082178917) | Fax: [+86 10 8217 8913](tel:+861082178913)
connect@irdrinternational.org | <http://www.irdrinternational.org>